

Exemplars scored with the Holistic Rubric Based on 6 Traits of Writing.

Prompt: Set 1

Writing

DIRECTIONS:

Read the writing prompt below. Use the space on this page for your prewriting activity. Then write your first draft on the following two pages.

Favorite Authors Week is coming up at your school. During this week the school invites published authors to speak to the students. Write a letter to your principal to persuade him/her to invite your favorite author to speak to the students at your school.

Your letter should:

- Target a specific audience and purpose.
- Organize clear ideas into meaningful sequence.
- Be in appropriate business letter form.

Remember to edit for spelling, grammar, punctuation, and capitalization.

AIMS Writing is a summative test of writing that is scored holistically. The prompt is revealed only at the time of testing. The student responses are produced in one sitting without any outside assistance during the writing process. Other than consulting a dictionary or a thesaurus, the student is writing entirely on his or her own. The AIMS score offers a snapshot of how well the student writes to the cold prompt on that day. Students who have the opportunity to write often in many different settings will better demonstrate the skills they have learned when they respond to the AIMS prompt.

The holistic rubric used for scoring AIMS Writing is based on the 6 Traits of Writing used as a teaching tool in Arizona classrooms. Strand 2 of the Academic Writing Standard is also based on the 6 Traits of Writing. In the classroom, teachers can focus on one or more traits according to their lesson plans, score writing for individual trait(s), and offer constructive feedback on the trait(s) to each student. Teaching writing at any level requires specific feedback, and using the 6 Traits of Writing is an excellent way to assist students in recognizing their strengths and weaknesses throughout the school year.

Scoring for AIMS with the holistic rubric emphasizes the traits that are most important for recognizing good writing. Ideas, content development, and organization are the heart of any piece of writing. Without clear, focused ideas developed logically with supporting details, a paper will not communicate the intended message. Voice, word choice, and fluency are the next most important elements of a written response. With appropriate vocabulary and the crafting of sentences, the writer can enhance ideas and connect with his or her audience, whether formally or informally. Conventions are also important, but even with good skills in conventions, a response will not communicate well without the other qualities.

Each of the following papers is assigned a score from 1 to 6. A score point 1 paper is inferior, a score point 2 paper is poor, a score point 3 paper is inadequate, a score point 4 paper is appropriate and acceptable, a score point 5 paper is excellent and skillful, and a score point 6 paper is sophisticated and skillful. Perfect papers do not exist; therefore, even those that score 5 or 6 will have some errors.

HOLISTIC RUBRIC BASED ON 6 TRAITS OF WRITING

<p>SCORE POINT 6</p> <p>Response is sophisticated and skillful in written communication, demonstrated by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • exceptional clarity, focus, and control in topic development and organization that often show insight. • in-depth and/or creative exploration of the topic using rich, relevant, and credible details. • a strong, perhaps creative, beginning and a satisfying conclusion. • specifically and carefully chosen words that are skillfully crafted into phrases and sentences that enhance meaning. • intentional and committed interaction between the writer and the reader. • effective and/or creative use of a wide range of conventions with few errors. 	<p>SCORE POINT 5</p> <p>Response is excellent and skillful in written communication, demonstrated by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • clarity, focus, and control in topic development and organization. • a balanced and thorough exploration of the topic using relevant details. • an inviting beginning and a satisfying sense of closure. • a broad range of carefully chosen words crafted into phrases and varied sentences that sound natural. • awareness of the reader and commitment to the audience and topic. • effective use of a wide range of conventions with few errors. 	<p>SCORE POINT 4</p> <p>Response is appropriate and acceptable in written communication, demonstrated by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ideas adequately developed with a clear and coherent presentation of ideas with order and structure that can be formulaic. • relevant details that are at times general or limited; organization that is clear, but sometimes predictable. • a recognizable beginning and ending, although one or both may be somewhat weak. • effective word choice that is functional and, at times, shows interaction between writer and audience. • somewhat varied sentence structure with good control of simple constructions; a natural sound. • control of standard conventions although a wide range is not used; errors that do not impede readability.
<p>SCORE POINT 3</p> <p>Response is inadequate in written communication, demonstrated by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • broad or simplistic ideas that are understood but often ineffective. • attempts at organizing that are inconsistent or ineffective; beginnings and endings that are underdeveloped; repetitive transitional devices. • developmental details that are uneven, somewhat predictable or leave information gaps; details are not always placed effectively in the writing. • reliance on clichés and overused words that do not connect with the reader; limited audience awareness. • monotonous and sometimes misused words; sentences that may sound mechanical, although simple constructions are usually correct. • limited control of standard conventions with significant errors 	<p>SCORE POINT 2</p> <p>Response is poor in written communication, demonstrated by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • overly simplistic and sometimes unclear ideas that have insufficiently developed details • sequencing of ideas that is often just a list; missing or ineffective details that require reader inference to comprehend and follow. • missing beginning and/or ending. • repetitive, monotonous, and often misused words are awkwardly strung into sentences that are difficult to read because they are either choppy or rambling; most sentences begin with repetitive noun + verb. • lack of audience awareness. • little control of basic conventions resulting in errors impeding readability. 	<p>SCORE POINT 1</p> <p>Response is inferior in written communication, demonstrated by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • lack of purpose or ideas and sequencing. • organization that obscures the main point. • an attempt that is too short to offer coherent development of an idea, if it is stated. • extremely limited vocabulary that shows no commitment to communicating a message. • sentences with confusing word order that may not permit oral reading. • severe and frequent errors in conventions.

Grade 6

Score Point 1 (Set 1)

Dear Mr. B ,
I would like to
see my favorite author
this week at the
school invites,

The response is a general statement about “my favorite author,” but it is too short to offer coherent development. Sequencing is not attempted and the order of words confuses the reader. While there is a salutation to show letter format, the writing earns a score point 1.

The response is not a 2 because of its brevity and lack of skill demonstration in developing an idea.

Dear Prinsipal
I would rilly aprisheate it if you would invite
my favorite athor?

He could read to us,
He could give us tips on how to write
better,

He wrote the book holes.
He gives lotes of detail.
He trys not to leave any thing out.

He is a rilly good athor I would
rilly like it if you invited him?

Sincerely

This paper earns a score point 2. The writer offers the idea of inviting his/her “favorite author” but does not identify the person. While there is somewhat of a beginning, it is repeated as the ending, and both sentences use an incorrect question mark. Neither are effective. The sequencing is one list of ideas about what the author could do and another list of how the author writes. There is no development of the ideas beyond the lists as well as no transitioning between the lists. The writer did attempt letter format with a salutation and a closing. Sentences are repetitive and monotonous with use of the noun + verb pattern. Conventions of capitalization, end marks, and paragraphing are included, but without use of internal punctuation and correct spelling of common words (Prinsipal, rilly, athor, lotes, Sincerely), skill in basic conventions is not demonstrated.

The response is not a 1 because there are some ideas present and, although simplistic, they are not always unclear to the reader. It is not a 3 because the sequencing is a list and missing details require reader inference. Repetitive words and sentences with the noun + verb structure also keep the paper from being a 3.

1-6-09

Dear principal H.

I have written this letter to you to convince you to let Lorange Yep to visit are school.

He would be an inpration to all showing that writing can be fan.

Lorange Yep could read one of his books in the library Because a lot of people loves his books like I do. Plus it can convince kids to read because his books are fild with wonderful fantasy with dragons, monsters, and magic. this would be such a wonderful school since children would read more because book ara an adventurer.

thats why I want Lorange Yep to visit are school

Your freind

Grade 6

Score Point 3b (Set 1)

The writing offers broad and simplistic ideas, but developmental details are uneven and not always placed effectively. The writer states that Laurence Yep could be an “inpiration to all,” moves on to having the author read in the library because “people loves his books,” continues with a list of topics from the author’s books that will “convince kids to read,” and then writes that “this would be such a wonderful school since children would read more . . .” The underdeveloped beginning and ending are awkwardly worded. Two transitions (Because, Plus) are included but are not completely effective to connect the ideas. The writer attempts letter format with a salutation and conclusion, but there is little or no connection to the audience in this rambling response. Random capitalization and lack of punctuation further inhibits the reader in this score point 3 paper.

The response is not a 2 because ideas are present and there is an attempt at organizing them. The response is not a 4 because the presentation of ideas is not clear and coherent and there is not noticeable interaction between the reader and the writer.

Dear Ms. G,

As you know, Favorite Authors Week is coming up. I thought it might be a good idea to invite Jim Davis to our school in honor of Favorite Authors Week. He writes the Garfield comic books. Have you ever heard of them, or read them? They are hilarious!

I want to invite him to our school because he is a great writer, and I think he could motivate more people to write. I don't necessarily mean that he'll only motivate us to write comic books. He can motivate us to write any kind of book by showing us that we can do anything in books, with our cool imagination.

I was also thinking that he could talk about how he writes comic books. Like how he puts life into his character drawings, or where he gets his ideas from. That would be a good idea because some people might want to learn how to write comic books.

Please think about my letter. I know a lot of people would love to have him here, especially me! It would be a nice treat. Well, thank you for taking time to read this!

Sincerely,
J

Score Point 4b (Set 1)

The writing is a clear and coherent response to the prompt with adequate development in some areas. Both the beginning and the ending are recognizable; the beginning creates interaction between the writer and reader. “Have you ever heard of them, or read them? They are hilarious!” Both a salutation and a closing are used to indicate letter format. Some details are general and limited at times: “. . . because he is a great writer . . .,” “He can motivate us to write any kind of book . . .,” and “It would be a great treat.” Words are effective and functional; sentences are somewhat varied in structure: “That would be a good idea because some people might want to learn how to write comic books.” The writer demonstrates control of standard conventions but a wide range is not used.

The response is not a 3 because there is some effective development of ideas with relevant details, and the beginning and ending are more than recognizable. There is interaction between the writer and reader. The response is not a 5 because the development is not balanced and thorough. While the beginning is inviting and there is awareness of the reader, the clarity and focus in development and organization is not present. Words are not carefully chosen for meaning; they are functional.

Dear Mr. H ,

As you know, Favorite Author's Week is approaching. Some kids at Middle School are violent or doubt themselves. Many believe that they are alone in this world. This is why David Pellzer, the author of the novels "A Child Called It", "The Lost Boy", and "A Man Named David" should visit us. He was once abused by his mother in his early years. David's case was one of the worst in California.

I believe he should come to to educate us on violence. Many young people now a days think violence is cool. David was a victim of it and he and the many others who have read his books know that it is only harmful. If he were to talk to us, he could probably change some of our views and save many of us from a trip to jail.

Mr. Pellzer could also educate us on Foster homes. A few children in have had the unfortunate experience of having to move from home to home, searching for a loving, caring family. For the children new to this experience, it would give an outlook on what to expect. Many of them could have all of their questions answered.

David lived in a very secluded world with only an unloving family, harsh punishments, abuse, and constant

fear and hunger. Poor David had to wear the same clothes each day. His mother had forbidden him to play with other children. Quite a few kids at _____ do not have friends, either. Maybe he could make more of us think twice before judging people on their appearance.

He could also be an inspiration to us. We could learn some important life lessons such as "never give up" or "keep moving." His books are so powerful and moving that it may change us even more just listening to him. _____ students will know we're not alone and if David can survive, so can we. We can also believe that dreams are not just hallucinations and that we should hold on to them.

Sincerely,

Score Point 5c (Set 1)

The response demonstrates clarity, focus, and control in topic development and organization without being formulaic. While formatting is represented by only a salutation and closing, the writer establishes audience by referring to the principal in the beginning of the letter: “As you know, Favorite Author’s week is approaching.” Details thoroughly explore the reasons it is a good choice to invite “David Pellzer” to speak to the students. The writer cites facts about the author’s life and his books that will allow him to educate students about a variety of topics: violence, abuse, loneliness, being judgemental, and growing up. “. . . he would probably change some of our views and save many of us from a trip to jail.” “Mr. Pellzer could educate us on foster homes.” “Maybe he could make more of us think twice before judging people on their appearance.” “_____students will know we’re not alone and if David could survive, so can we.” The beginning is inviting and the ending provides a satisfying sense of closure. While word choice is not outstanding, the writer shows commitment to the topic by providing a focused and thorough explanation of how and why the author will have a positive effect on students. Sentences are varied, presenting details to inform the reader about the author that are compelling. Conventions are effective with quotations used for effect in paragraph five. The error in underlining and using quotations for book titles is easily overlooked.

The writing is not a 4 because of the thorough and focused development and the commitment to the topic. The response is not a 6 because there was not a creativity in the presentation of details, nor were there skillfully crafted sentences that enhanced meaning.

April 22, 2009

Mrs. B Principal
 Elementary
 , Arizona

RE: Favorite Author

Hello,

This time of year indicates that the "Favorite Authors Week" is yet upon us again. As students eagerly wait to see their favorite authors in person, we know that you are working hard to bring authors to the school.

Countless people each day are influenced by various authors' books or stories, whether it is an article in a newspaper, a children's picture-book, or even a poem. The literary arts can be compared to one of the triumphs of mankind.

A good author gives not only a certain feeling to the reader, but makes the story seem to come to life in its realism. The reader should be swept away into a different galaxy while traversing the depths of

the storyline. The author that I feel fits the description of "The Good Author" is H.G. Wells. H.G. Wells has produced such astounding books such as "The Time Machine" and "War of the Worlds", both award-winning pieces of art. H.G. Wells has not only inspired me to write, but to think in other dimensions; to think "outside of the box".

H.G. Wells is a creative author to say the least. To think of a storyline where a man invents a "Time Machine" is not a new idea, but it is the way he represents his thoughts that is informative and distinctly written. Should H.G. Wells come to our school, many students would be motivated to write better and better stories. H.G. Wells could help us improve our writing skills and show us how he was motivated to become an author himself. Please consider inviting H.G. Wells to the "Favorite Authors Week" event. We would really appreciate it.

Regards,

Score Point 6c (Set 1)

The response has exceptional clarity, focus, and control. Development of the topic shows insight. The beginning is creative and the end is satisfying. The application of nearly correct letter format demonstrates skill. The audience and purpose are established, and the writer shows strength and control in organizing the relevant and credible details. Paragraphs two and three extend the beginning of the letter to include background information before revealing the chosen author. The reasoning for the choice is controlled and effective. “Countless people each day are influenced by various authors’ books and stories . . . ” “A good author not only gives a certain feeling to the reader, but makes the story seem to come to life in its realism.” “The author that I feel fits the description of ‘the Good Author’ is H. G. Wells.” Words are carefully chosen and crafted into phrases and sentences that enhance the meaning of the message. “The reader should be swept away into a different galaxy while traversing the depths of the storyline.” “H.G. Wells has not only inspired me to write, but to think in other dimensions; to ‘think outside of the box’”. There is committed interaction between the writer and the reader. “Should H.G. Wells come to our school, many students would be motivated to write better and better stories.” “Please consider inviting H.G. Wells to the ‘Favorite Authors’s Week’ event. We would really appreciate it.” Conventions are effective and a wide range is used.

The response is not a 5 because of the thorough and balanced exploration of the topic, the commitment to the audience, and the crafting of well-chosen words into phrases and sentences.